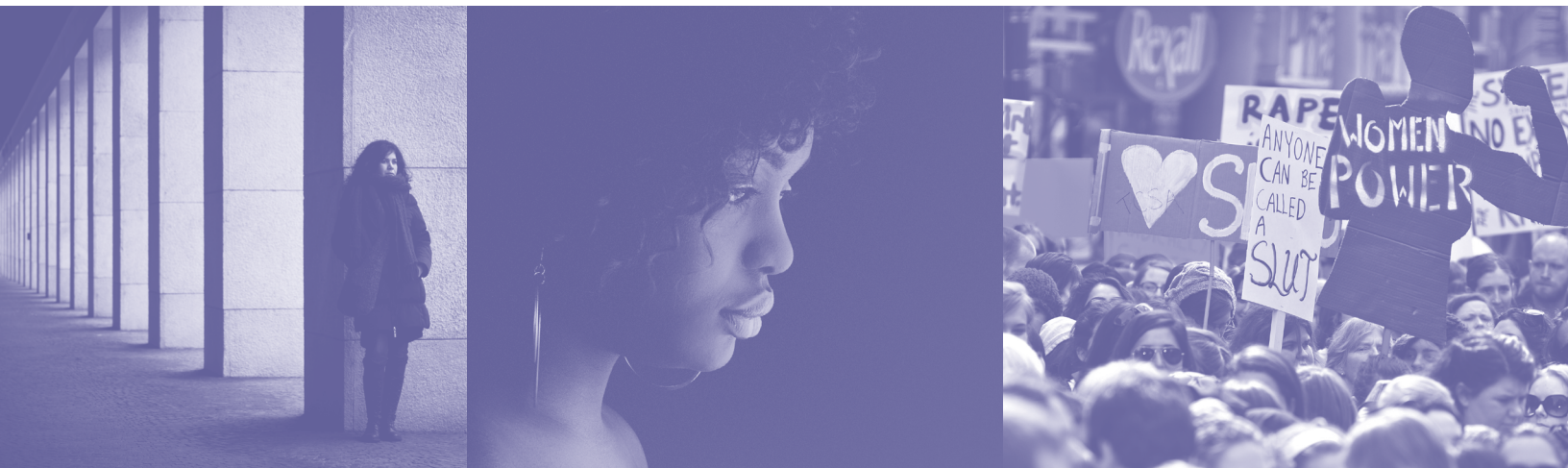


Through a Gender Lens: ISSUE BRIEF

RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

Private Violence, Community Impacts

*The emotional, social and financial costs that result from violence against women are significant. Our report, **Through a Gender Lens: the Economic Security of Women and Girls in Forsyth County**, touched on the linkage between violence against women and women's economic security. This issue brief looks at the issue of rape and other forms of sexual assault, and the ramifications it has for women and our community.*



Spring 2013

THE WOMEN'S FUND OF WINSTON-SALEM



THE IMPACT OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

DEFINING THE ISSUE

“Sexual assault can be defined as any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs by force or without consent of the recipient of the unwanted sexual activity. Falling under the definition of sexual assault is sexual activity such as forced sexual intercourse, forcible sodomy, child molestation, incest, fondling, and attempted rape.”

— U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE-OFFICE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The legal definitions of what constitutes a sexual offense vary from state to state. In North Carolina, the definition of “First Degree Rape” includes that the perpetrator must engage in vaginal intercourse by force and against the will of the victim. The definition of “Sexual Offense” includes that the perpetrator commit a sexual act by force, against the victim’s will, and involving either the use of a weapon or inflicting serious bodily injury. For many victims, these definitions do not encompass the violations and assaults they experience, nor do they account for the spiritual and emotional trauma that many describe as a more devastating loss.

EMOTIONAL IMPACTS

The experience of rape has intense, devastating, and long-lasting effects on the survivor. In addition to physical injury she may have sustained during the assault, victims experience trauma, confusion, anger, anxiety, depression, distress, shame, and fear that can manifest in many ways throughout her lifetime. While the media and our culture often portray “the rapist” as a stranger in the night, 78% of victims of sexual assault are violated by someone they know and have a relationship with prior to the assault, such as a family member, intimate partner, friend or acquaintance.¹ For many survivors, this ultimate betrayal of personal trust has long-lasting impacts on their ability to form and maintain personal relationships. “The memory of it never leaves you,” said one victim. “You can think you have made sense of it and moved on, but then something happens, and it’s back. Sometimes I look at my beautiful daughter and how proud and strong she is, and I think I never want this to happen to her.”

ECONOMIC IMPACTS

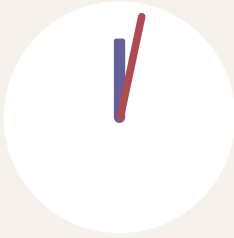
The emotional scars of sexual assault have long-lasting impacts on both a woman’s personal relationships and economic well-being. A number of studies have cited the value of this loss as second only to that of murder. The dollar costs to the victim includes not only medical expenses related to the trauma, mental health care, loss of productivity at school and work, legal fees and expenses, but also the intangible costs of the long term loss of quality of life, quantified in legal terms as “pain and suffering.” The costs to society include police and criminal justice system expenses, loss of productivity and wages both from women’s participation in the labor force as well as their economic contributions in their domestic sphere, lost tax revenues, victim compensation, and treatment and prevention programs.

THE COST OF RAPE/SEXUAL ASSAULT²

Direct Costs to Victim	\$5,556
Criminal Justice Costs	\$26,479
Pain & Suffering	\$198,212

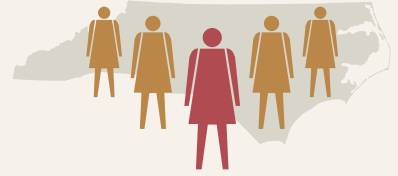
Total Cost of Each Rape/Sexual Assault: \$230,247

FACTS ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT



**EVERY
2 MINUTES**

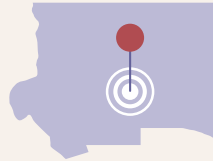
someone in the U.S.³
is sexually assaulted.



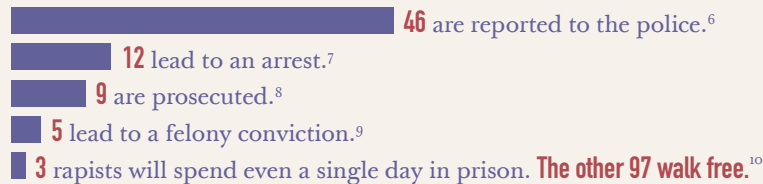
1 IN 5 WOMEN

in North Carolina will
be the victim of a sexual
assault in her lifetime.⁵

In **2012**, there were **346 SEXUAL ASSAULTS**
reported in Forsyth County, including
97 rapes and **114** cases of child molestation.⁴



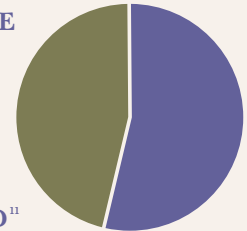
WHAT HAPPENS TO RAPISTS? OUT OF EVERY 100 RAPES:



ESTIMATES ARE
THAT ONLY

46%

OF RAPES
ARE REPORTED¹¹



Sexual assault is one of the most underreported crimes.

Reasons victims give for not reporting the crime include: fear of the perpetrator; self-blame or guilt; shame, embarrassment, or desire to keep the assault a private matter; fear of not being believed or of being accused of playing a role in the crime; lack of trust in the criminal justice system; and fear of deportation (for immigrant women without proper documentation).

Sexual assault can impact anyone including men and boys. However, girls and young women are particularly vulnerable and disproportionately impacted.

AGE AT THE TIME OF FIRST RAPE VICTIMIZATION¹²



80%

Local data also reflects this disparity. Of the 346 sexual assaults reported in Forsyth County in 2012, 81% of the victims were age 25 or younger (88% of these victims were female).

10.2%

of female students in
Winston-Salem/Forsyth
County High Schools
report being physically
forced to have intercourse.¹³

SEXUAL ASSAULTS AT LOCAL COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES¹⁴

	2009	2010	2011
FTCC	0	0	0
SALEM	0	0	0
UNCSC	1	0	2
WFU	6	7	5
WSSU	1	1	0
TOTAL	8	8	7

Fewer than 5% of attempted and completed rapes of college women are reported to law enforcement officials, which means that we have approximately **160 or more** sexual assaults among local college students each year.¹⁵ The emotional trauma associated with sexual assault can impact a student's classwork, grades and may even lead to dropping out of school, which impacts her economic security.

SEXUAL ASSAULT IN FORSYTH COUNTY

HISTORY

For decades, numerous people in Forsyth County have worked to help identify women and children who have been harmed as a result of experiencing a violent act, particularly sexual assault. The efforts of these determined advocates have benefited a great number of women and children by exposing these assaults to the conscience of the community and by the creation of a variety of services. The services created have been designed to help prevent the reoccurrence of such experiences, to assist in developing the skills needed to cope with this trauma, and to provide the support needed for persons in these circumstances to transition to safer and healthier environments. Similar to what was developing in many cities around the country, Winston-Salem's response to sexual assault began in a grassroots manner in 1975 with a telephone rape crisis line answered mostly by volunteers. Over the years, the movement has grown to the services we have today.

Current Services

FAMILY SERVICES provides a number of services for survivors including crisis intervention, advocates to assist during hospital exams and through the legal and court processes, and support and information services. In 2010-2011, Family Services provided these services to 373 sexual assault survivors.¹⁶

SEXUAL ASSAULT NURSE EXAMINERS are available in the Emergency Departments of both Forsyth Medical Center and Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center.

THE SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE TEAM (SART) OF WINSTON-SALEM/FORSYTH COUNTY is a community collaborative convened by Family Services with representatives from law enforcement, criminal justice, medical, educational, and other community systems which respond to survivors of sexual assault and develop effective avenues of prevention.

24-hour Sexual Assault Crisis Line (336) 722-4457

ENDNOTES

¹ Bureau of Justice Statistics. *Female Victims of Sexual Violence*, 1994-2010.

² McCollister, K., et. al. (2010). *The cost of crime to society: New crime-specific estimates for policy and program evaluation*. Drug and Alcohol Dependence 108.

³ Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network

⁴ Data provided by the Winston-Salem Police Department Information Technology Division and the Forsyth County Sheriff's Department. *Note that this does not include reports made to the Kernersville Police Department.*

⁵ National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, CDC. *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report*.

⁶ Justice Department, *National Crime Victimization Survey: 2006-2010*.

⁷ FBI, *Uniform Crime Reports: 2006-2010*.

⁸ National Center for Policy Analysis, *Crime and Punishment in America*, 1999.

⁹ Department of Justice, *Felony Defendants in Large Urban Counties: average of 2002-2006*.

¹⁰ Department of Justice, *Felony Defendants in Large Urban Counties: average of 2002-2006*.

¹¹ Department of Justice, *National Crime Victimization Survey: 2006-2010*.

¹² *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report*. All percentages are weighted to U.S. population.

¹³ 2011 WSFCS Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results.

¹⁴ Campus Crime Reports.

¹⁵ Bureau of Justice Statistics (2010). *The Sexual Victimization of College Women*.

¹⁶ NC Council for Women. *2010-2011 County Statistics*.